

Unimas wins 13 awards for top-notch research

7BP wed. 28 Feb 07 P3

KUCHING: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) bagged 13 awards for exceptional research performance and won various recognitions locally and internationally for 2005-6.

All outstanding performers received cash prizes as well as certificates at the Unimas Research Award Night 2007 on Monday.

The event was graced by Tan Sri Datuk Amar Bujang Mohd Nor, chairman of Unimas Board of Directors.

A special award (gold medal) was presented to Professor Dr Khairuddin Abdul Hamid and his rural informatics research team at the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM) Biennial Conference 2006 in Australia.

The performance of Dr Khairuddin and his team, whose e-Bario Project had been selected as the Best ICT Project, beating 120 other entries from 13 Commonwealth Countries in the CAPAM conference and exhibition, was lauded by Unimas Vice Chancellor, Professor Datuk Dr Abdul Rashid Abdullah.

"They did very well in beating the other contestants.

My advice to anyone who wants to be a real scholar is to delve into

real time research," he said.

He added that the objective of the annual research award presentation was to recognise university researchers who had excelled in their fields and motivate and encourage young lecturers to conduct quality research.

The Best Researcher Award was won by Associate Professor Dr Wang Yin Chai of the Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology while the Young Researcher Award was won by Puah Chin Hong of the Faculty of Economics and Business.

The Highest International R&D Grant Recipient Award went to Professor Dr Mary Jane Cardosa of the Institute of Health and Community Medicine, while Professor Dr Balbir Singh of the Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences succeeded in securing RM5.2 million in research grant to be shared between them.

Prizes and recognitions were also given to Gold Medallists and Special Award recipients at the 34th International Exhibition of Inventions, New Techniques and Products held in Geneva, Switzerland last year.

Dr Nazlina Saari of the Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts was declared the Best Winner at

International R & D Exhibitions in 2005-6.

Unimas also announced the establishment of two new Centres of Research Excellence, namely the Centre of Excellence for Image Analysis & Spatial Technologies and Centre of Excellence for Rural Informatics.

The conferment of Centres of Excellence status is in recognition of the past achievements of these research groups and their strategic importance in advancing these areas of research at Unimas for the benefits of society at large.

The Research Award event also featured six new innovative products developed by the Unimas academic staff.

These included a packaged software for competency test called i-Competent, a new biodegradable formulation that can replace wax in Batik making industry, a surgery aid device and imaging products for augmented reality.

Meanwhile, a representative of the Normah Medical Foundation Charitable Trust Board who was present at the event, presented the Normah Medical Foundation Research Grant worth RM10,000 to Tan Cheong Huat, a Unimas post-graduate student doing research on Malaria.